

Principles of Integrated Language Teaching

The principles of Integrated Language Teaching can be incorporated into EFL classes, where integrated lessons will prepare students for the content area classes as well as improving their English skills. They can also be used by the content area teacher to help all students build literacy skills while learning the subject matter of the class.

These principles are:

1. Language should not be taught in the discrete chunks of reading, writing, speaking and listening, but as a whole.
2. Language skills are developed when language is being used as a tool to accomplish a task or reach a goal, not when the language itself is the subject of study.
3. For language skills to develop, students need to be exposed to large amounts of language that is interesting and useful to them.
4. If students use the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing naturally in the process of solving problems and completing tasks, they will develop these skills better than if the skills are isolated.
5. Students already have knowledge and experiences that they can bring their exploration of a topic through the use of the target language.
6. Students need practice in all the varieties of ways that native speakers use the language to develop their proficiency.
7. A supportive environment is important for the full development of language proficiency.

Sample Integrated Language Projects:

- a. Together, the students and teacher identify a topic to explore. In a content area class, this topic will be related to that area.
- b. Brainstorming produces ideas related to the topic. Web diagrams, Venn diagrams, and other methods of semantic mapping can be used to stimulate thinking and develop subtopics.
- c. The teacher helps the students draw on their background knowledge, experience, and cultural heritage in developing the topic.
- d. Students use all the skills of language -- reading, writing, speaking and listening -- in exploring the topic and communicating about it. They may read literature related to the topic, use reference books, draw pictures and write about them, etc.